

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 5 is amended and claims 13 and 14 are added.

Applicants appreciate the Office Action's indication that claims 1, 3 and 4 contain allowable subject matter.

I. Claim 6 Satisfies the Requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

The Office Action rejects claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

This feature "spacers being a mixture of a single element and an aggregate" is disclosed in the specification at page 14, paragraph 81. Applicants believe that this disclosure clearly defines this feature.

II. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 5, 7, 8 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over JP 04301621 to Sakamoto et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Sakamoto does not disclose a portion of the spacers being located at intersections of the non-pixel regions and another portion of the spacers being arranged at locations other than intersections of the non-pixel regions, as in amended independent claim 5. Instead, Sakamoto discloses that the spacers are arranged at the intersections of the non-pixel regions only. See, e.g., Sakamoto at Figs. 1, 3 and 4.

The Office Action rejects claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over JP 2002-072218 to Kaiba in view of USP 6,063,194 to Poliniak et al., USP 6,702,419 to Stoessel et al. and U.S. Publication No. 2004/0005182 to Gaylo. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

None of the applied references disclose a nozzle head that is rotatable such that an arrangement direction of the plurality of nozzle holes is inclined at a predetermined angle with respect to a direction perpendicular to the scanning direction, as in independent claim 2.

The Office Action recognizes that Kaiba does not disclose this feature. However, Applicants respectfully disagree with the Office Action's assertion that Poliniak, Stoessel or Gaylo provide the deficiencies of Kaiba.

With respect to Poliniak, the nozzle rotation motor 131 drives the rotating baffle 133. See, e.g., Poliniak at col. 13, lines 44-45. The baffle serves to increase the uniformity of the powder cloud at the target. See, e.g., col. 14, lines 3-5 and Figs. 11A and 11B. As shown in Fig. 11A, the nozzles of Poliniak could not be arranged so that the plurality of nozzle holes are inclined at a predetermined angle with respect to a direction perpendicular to a scanning direction.

With respect to Stoessel and Gaylo, neither of these references disclose a rotatable nozzle head. In Stoessel the angular rotation of the nozzles are determined. The nozzles themselves are not rotated. In Gaylo, the printhead assembly 500 moves along two perpendicular axes. See, e.g., paragraph 157 and Figs. 5 and 6.

The Office Action rejects claims 6, 9 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Sakamoto and claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Sakamoto in view of U.S. Publication No. 2003/0002005 to Utsumi et al., U.S. Publication No. 2003/0058399 to Miyashita and U.S. Publication No. 2002/0093617 to Matsuyama et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 6, 9, 10 and 11 depend from independent claim 5 which, as discussed above, contains patentable subject matter. Thus, claims 6, 9, 10 and 11 also contain patentable subject matter.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: June 9, 2005

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